



## A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

### *Keep it Ticking*

American Heart Month — February 2017

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*[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

[Dr. Sonja Rasmussen] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm Dr. Sonja Rasmussen, filling in for your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Heart disease is the number one killer in the United States, accounting for one in four deaths each year. Many of these could have been prevented through simple lifestyle changes.

Booker Daniels is a health communications specialist with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. He's joining us today to discuss the importance of maintaining a healthy heart. Welcome to the show, Booker.

[Booker Daniels] Thank you, Dr. Rasmussen.

[Dr. Sonja Rasmussen] Booker, how many people die from heart disease each year in the United States?

[Booker Daniels] More than 630,000 people died from heart disease in 2015.

[Dr. Sonja Rasmussen] What are the leading causes of heart disease?

[Booker Daniels] Well, the leading causes are high blood pressure, high cholesterol, smoking, diabetes, physical inactivity, poor diet, and excessive use of alcohol.

[Dr. Sonja Rasmussen] What are some of the symptoms of heart problems?

[Booker Daniels] Most people think of heart attacks when they think about heart disease, but there are different types of heart disease, so symptoms will depend upon the type of heart disease. Symptoms of a heart attack include chest pain or discomfort and the pain may radiate to the jaw or arms, people may experience shortness of breath, breaking out in a cold sweat, feeling nauseated or light headed. Women can have feelings of nausea, dull pain in the upper part of the abdomen, fatigue, but may not always have pain. If you think someone is having a heart attack, it's important to call 911 immediately. Sometimes people have heart disease and may not have any symptoms until they have a heart attack. With other types of heart disease, such as heart failure, symptoms include fatigue, shortness of breath, and swelling of the feet.

[Dr. Sonja Rasmussen] How can people prevent heart disease?

[Booker Daniels] You can prevent heart disease by making healthy choices. Eat a heart healthy diet that is high in fresh fruits and vegetables and low in sodium and trans fat. Be physically active. Get at least 150 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise each week and do muscle strengthening exercise at least twice a week. Smoking greatly increases your risk of heart disease. If you smoke, get help to quit, and if you don't smoke, don't start. Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight leads to high blood pressure and heart disease. You should also limit your alcohol use. Too much can raise your blood pressure, and high blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease and usually has no symptoms. If you have high blood pressure, you should work with your health care professional to keep it controlled.

[Dr. Sonja Rasmussen] How often should a person have their heart checked by a health care provider?

[Booker Daniels] Regular check-ups are important for preventing heart disease and managing risk factors. Be sure to ask your health care professional for what's right for you.

[Dr. Sonja Rasmussen] Booker, where can listeners get more information about heart disease?

[Booker Daniels] Listeners can go to [cdc.gov/heart-disease](http://cdc.gov/heart-disease).

[Dr. Sonja Rasmussen] Thanks, Booker. I've been talking today with Mr. Booker Daniels about ways to maintain a healthy heart.

To help prevent heart disease, control your weight by consuming a diet high in fruits and vegetables and low in fat and sodium, and be physically active. Regular checkups are important for identifying heart problems early.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Sonja Rasmussen for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.